Watertown Daily Times
40 Watertown, N. Y.
Wed., May 20, 1970

Today's

Malone Man Accused of Bank Robbery Held in $10,000 Bail

By ROBERT J. SPATH

— Times Staff Photo

CASH, GUN, CLOTHING RECOVERED — Dudley Chapman, Adams Cove, president of the First National Bank of Dexter, counts part of the $6,000 cash stolen from his bank in Tuesday's armed robbery. The loot, pelletgun and clothing were recovered on the Perch River Road near Brownville. From left: Sheriff Robert B. Chaufty, leader of the manhunt which led to the arrest of James Michael Shea, 63, Malone, in only an hour and 17 minutes; Mr. Chapman, and sheriff's Det. Gary J. Ellingsworth, first officer at the scene of the crime and the man who arrested Shea at the Brownville Hotel.

— Times Staff Photo

First National Bank, Dexter, Scene of Tuesday's Holdup

— Photo by Leslie C. Cook, Times Staff Photographer

HOLDUP SUSPECT — James M. Shea, 63, Malone, accused of the $6,000 armed robbery Tuesday of the First National Bank of Dexter, about to be taken before a police line-up by Detective Gary J. Ellingsworth at Jefferson County Jail. Shea was arrested in the Brownville Hotel just one hour and 17 minutes after he allegedly held up the bank and made off toward Limerick.

— Times Staff Photo

ALERT EMPLOYES — Miss Margaret L. Kostyk, left, a teller at the First National Bank of Dexter, and Mrs. Alexander Kostyk, a part-time bank employe, were alert and observant Tuesday in obtaining the license number and color and make of the car which James M. Shea, 63, Malone, used after allegedly holding up the bank of $6,000 cash. The women, both of Dexter, are sisters-in-law.

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James Michael Shea, 63, a burly construction worker from Malone, was being held in lieu of $10,000 bail in Jefferson County Jail today on charges of robbery and grand larceny in the second degree in connection with the $6,000 armed holdup of the First National Bank of Dexter on Tuesday.

Det. Sgt. Irving P. Angel, of the Jefferson County Sheriff's Department, said the loot — all cash in denominations ranging from $1 to $100 bills — was discovered at 10:15 Tuesday night on the Perch River Road about two miles north of Brownville. A gun was also found, he said.

Shea, described by detectives as being five feet, seven inches tall and weighing about 180 pounds, was arrested in the Brownville Hotel just one hour and 17 minutes after he allegedly robbed the bank.

Detectives said Shea told them that he held up the bank "on impulse."

Shea appeared before Town of Brownville Justice Leo K. Thompson, who ordered him held for the July grand jury after Dist. Atty. William J. McClusky recommended bail of $10,000.

After questioning at county jail, Shea, a native of Constable in Franklin County, told detectives where the cash was situated. An unloaded pellet gun was also found on the Perch River Road where Shea told sheriff's deputies he changed clothes after hiding the loot and gun.

Shea, a diabetic, received treatment at Mercy Hospital after his arrest and Dr. Chris G. Ronson was to examine the man this morning at the county jail.

Leading the manhunt was Sheriff Robert B. Chaufty, along with detectives and uniformed deputies from his department. Also involved in the search for the suspect were FBI Agent Robert Howard, BCI and state police and village police officers from Dexter and Brownville. City police, along with authorities in Lewis, Oswego, and St. Lawrence Counties, were also alerted.

Sheriff's Det. Gary J. Ellingsworth, the first officer at the scene of the holdup and the arresting officer at the hotel, said that the description of a bank teller, Miss Margaret L. Kostyk, Dexter, "was so close that if the man was spotted on a street or roadway there would have been no doubt that he was the suspect."

Alarm Sounded

Miss Kostyk triggered the bank burglar alarm at 12:18 p.m. The alarm registered in the sheriff's office and Ellingsworth, working on another crime in Dexter only three blocks from the bank, received the dispatch and arrived at the scene three minutes later at 12:21. Nathan A. Holloway, an assistant cashier at the bank, told Ellingsworth the bank had just been held up.

The officer radioed for assistance and several deputies and troopers converged on the scene in about four minutes. Roadblocks were immediately set up and authorities from outlying counties were alerted.

State Police were detailed to the Watertown Municipal Airport and deputies stood by

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Man Held In Holdup

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at the Thousand Islands International Bridge.

Miss Kostyk and her sister-in-law, Mrs. Alexander Kostyk, also of Dexter, a part-time bank employe, furnished Ellingsworth with part of the license number (F-375) and the make and color of the car.

Route

Angel said Shea went from the bank to Limerick via Route 180, crossed Route 12E and then drove to the Perch River intersection and made a right turn. He said the suspect went down the latter road for a mile and hid the money and gun near a clump of bushes and under two flat rocks at the base of a tree.

"At the same time, he changed clothes," Angel quoted Shea as saying.

According to Angel, Shea then drove his car to Brownville and parked the vehicle at the rear of the hotel. Shea had a beer at the hotel and another drink at Cody's Grill across Main Street.

After returning to the hotel, Angel said, Glen Park Chief of Police Robert Thomas spotted the car at 1:15 p.m., sealed off the parking lot and called the sheriff's office. License plate number F-3751 was checked out through the National Crime Information Center computer. In less than 30 seconds, Angel said, the department knew that Shea was the owner of the car and that it had not been reported stolen.

Went to Hotel

Ellingsworth went to the hotel with Holloway, who identified Shea at the bar and the arrest was made at 1:35 p.m. Shea was taken to the jail and advised of his rights before he and five other persons stood in a police line-up. Angel said Shea was identified in the line-up by Miss Kostyk. Sheriff Chaufty and his detectives than questioned Shea and he revealed where he had hidden the money and gun.

Ellingsworth said the pellet gun was unloaded when he pointed it in the face of Miss Kostyk and demanded the money. The suspect was unmasked, according to Ellingsworth.

By coincidence, Bank President Dudley Chapman, Adams Cove, arrived at the sheriff's office just after the alarm was triggered.

Undersheriff Kenneth E., Carr and Det. John J. Griffith were also involved in the case, along with several deputies and troopers.

According to Angel, Shea had worked on construction in the Brownville-Dexter section and was familiar with the area. He generally worked as a trade foreman. Angel said Shea had left Malone Tuesday at 6:30 a.m. and was en route to Utica to look for a job.